

L I F E 4866. 6. 50.
2

OF

ARMELLE NICOLAS,

A POOR *K*

MAID SERVANT

IN

FRANCE,

AND YET

A NOBLE AND HAPPY SERVANT

OF THE

KING OF KINGS.

BRISTOL PRINTED:

DUBLIN:

REPRINTED BY JOHN GOUGH, N^o. 20,
MEATH-STREET.

1796.

L I F E

ARMELLE NICOLA

MAYD GUR VANT



KING OF KINGS

PRINTED BY

D. D. D. D.

PRINTED BY JOHN COUGH

M. M. M. M.

1790.

To all that useful part of mankind who
are providentially employed in the
Station of SERVANTS, of whatever
kind or degree

The following TRACT is affectionately dedicated.

TO you I need say nothing more by way of dedication, or preface, than singly to recommend the due perusal and application of the following history of the life of one of your worthy predecessors; as I think that would prove a matter of solid and lasting advantage to every one of you. In regard to those whom Providence has exalted, in this short life, into the station of Masters or of Lords, of Mistresses or of Ladies, I wish they may ever have it at heart to be just, humane, kind, tender-hearted; and to observe the golden rule of acting toward those in inferior stations, as they would desire their superiors, or governors, to act toward them, if it were their lot to be placed in the like stations; timely considering that we shall all stand on an equal footing, when arraigned before the great tribunal of impartial justice. If crosses and afflictions be necessary, during our sojourning here, (as undoubtedly they are) to our sanctification, let it be left to God to administer such as divine

wisdom sees to be the best for us, as they will be the most conducive to that desirable end.

THE history of the life of ARMELLE NICOLAS was written by a female, who had a long and very intimate acquaintance with her.

THE following epitome will, I doubt not, be a valuable tract to all who regard the great concerns of eternity; as it is concise and comprehensive, and well adapted to draw the attention to the one thing most needful; as it breathes the true spirit of piety inwardly felt, and outwardly manifested.

THE French history takes up two volumes duodecimo; the first containing above 550 pages, the second above 350; but is so very circumstantial on minute points, so particular about days and years, and what passed in them, as would make it (if the translation were to follow the original) far too tedious for the generality of English readers, and tend to carry off all the real benefit of the best parts. The main substance of it I thought well worthy of publication in the English language; and hope it will be both acceptable and useful to many.

**THE
FEMALE AUTHOR
OF THE
FOLLOWING HISTORY**

PREFACE

THUS:

" **I** T is so very rare to see erected, by the
" hand of God, a perfect model of in-
" struction, both for the learned and the
" ignorant, in the person of a poor country
" girl, who never knew A or B, and who
" passed her whole life in the station of a
" servant ; that having met with such a singu-
" lar event in the life of ARMELLE NICOLAS,
" I thought I could do nothing better than
" try to render the knowledge of it more
" extensive, even in countries where it has
" never yet appeared."

AFTER her Preface and Epistle follow sundry approbations of her work: After them testimonies on behalf of said ARMELLE, to the number of ten; the last of which is that of her master, with whom she lived a servant thirty-five years: He represents her as one who, during all that time, had given a most compleat and wonderful example of every kind of goodness; viz. indefatigable industry, prudence, patience, fidelity, charity, inward dependence on God, and resignation to his will, in all states, and under all sorts of trials.

AFTER above a hundred pages begins her life, of which the following is an Abstract.

6 NO 61

LIFE

ARMELLE NICOLAS.

THIS truly happy virgin was born the 19th of September, 1806, in the parish of *Campentac*, near the town of *Ploermel*, in the bishoprick of *St. Malo*, in the province of *Bretany*, in *France*. Her father's name was *GEORGE NICOLAS*, and her mother's *FRANÇOIS NEANT*. Though but slenderly furnished with the gifts of fortune, they feared God, and were zealous for his holy service. And this child was a blessing to them, and to many others too. She was their first-born. After her they had another daughter, and four sons. From her early age she was in-

clined to silence and solitude. Wherefore, when she grew up her mother sent her to tend the sheep, and other cattle. Here she retired to some corner of a hedge, while her little companions were intent on play and diversion. Even then did the LORD attract and unite her to himself by many infusions of tenderness and sweetness, enjoyed in her little devotions.

WHEN she was of age to attend her first communion she made all possible preparation for it; and longed for the arrival of the day. Receiving this divine sacrament she felt herself so smitten with love, that she could have wished for it every day. But, as in the country frequent communions are not usual, she was, for the most part of her time, deprived of her desire. The more she grew in age the more this desire encreased. She watched all opportunities of satisfying it. She often applied to some Priest to give her the holy communion, at whatever time and place she might be least perceived. And some there were who sometimes invited her to it of their own free motion, or rather that of God, who incited them thereto, to satisfy the desire of his faithful handmaid. And

several occasions of this kind might pass for miraculous.*

So great was her sympathy with the sufferings of her fellow creatures, that in her repasts she often deprived herself of what she liked best, and even of the whole, to give it to the poor. Often she denied the cravings of thirst, or of relaxation, with the same design. So ready was she to serve and succour every body, with affection and charity, that many loved her, and had recourse to her in their necessities, or distresses; so obedient to her parents, as never to cause them the least displeasure, inasmuch that they loved her more than all their other children.

WHEN she had attained the age of twenty, or two and twenty years, they wanted her to marry, and solicited her to it exceedingly, which she was never willing to hear of. Soon after a good young gentlewoman; who esteemed her highly, had a great desire to

*I am very unwilling to give the least offence to any tender minds. The Apostle PAUL writes, that *to the pure all things are pure*; the secret bent of the heart being the object of the ALMIGHTY'S regard. ARMELLE was innocent, honest, and zealous in the established prejudices of the nation in which she lived; and of the religious community of which she was a member. †What renders her memory valuable, and worthy to be rescued from oblivion, and exposed for a light to many thousands, is her being a bright example of pure practical christianity.

† Viz. Transubstantiation, &c.

take her into her service; and for that purpose earnestly requested it of her parents, who at first would not hearken to such a proposal; but at length seeing she continued so urgent, and likewise their daughter joining in her desire, they gave their consent, though not without great regret: both for the loss of her endearing company, and of the great services she performed for them.

With this gentlewoman, living at *Ploermel*, she seemed to herself to be delivered from a great burden, being now no more obliged, on holidays and Sundays,* to attend at country dances and assemblies, to which her companions had sometimes taken her, as it were by force, she having a very great aversion to them; which had made her quite weary of the country. Beside, she had more frequent opportunities of attending to what she conceived her religious duties.

Her mistress was so well pleased with her company and her services, that she was as fond of her as if she had been her own child, never blaming her for any thing, except working too much; for though peaceable, she was active, of an healthy constitution, and would

* Holy-days and Sundays, very improperly so called. These days being by many very prophanelly spent in sports and diversions, or in drunkencness and riot.

dispatch as much work as two others. In the mean time her father dying, her mistress gave her leave to go for some days to console and assist her mother: And yet, as she could not be happy without her, she desired her to return as soon as possible; which she did. Though she met with nothing but affection and kindness from without, she laboured under an increasing uneasiness within. After having lived here two years she desired her discharge, and with no small difficulty obtained it, her mistress offering both to raise her wages, and to discharge her from a part of the work of the house, so loth was she to part with her, and so willing to keep her on any terms that would be most agreeable to herself, but in vain. She returned to her mother in the country, who joyfully received her. Her relations solicited her again with much importunity to marry; but her mind was turned quite another way. After having resided here four months, she returned to the town; where several were desirous of having her in their service, from the excellent character, which, by her conduct and fidelity, she had acquired.

In less than four months she tried three new places; but indulgence and kind treatment did not seem to answer the state of her mind. Her inward satisfaction was gone; anxiety

and agony of spirit had taken its place, About this time God presented her with one, proper for the accomplishment of the designs which he had upon her. Here she had no expectations given her of an easy place, but quite the contrary; yet she felt her mind moved to think this her right place: And so it proved. For here the LORD put his hand to the work, to lay the foundations of that high and great edifice of perfection, and to adorn and embellish that temple which his MAJESTY had reserved for himself, to be the throne of his love, the place of his habitation and of his delight.

In this house they were accustomed every evening, after supper, to read the lives of Saints, or some other spiritual book, which gave her great pleasure, with an ardent desire to join herself to the companions of CHRIST. Day and night she could think of nothing else but the means of becoming like them. She often desired one of the daughters of this family, who has since become a Nun among the *Ursulinas* of that town, to read for her; which she willingly did. God also provided ARMELLE with a director, well acquainted with the ways of the spirit. Happening one day to go to him to confess, after her confession she felt herself strongly inspired to declare to him all the condition of her soul.

He encouraged her much to be faithful to God, to resign herself entirely to his conduct; and offered to assist her with his best ability, bidding her come freely to him whenever she should need his assistance.

AFTER this, she underwent great spiritual conflicts; through which she was preserved stedfast in the fear of God, though in great distress of mind, till it pleased him in his tender compassion to cause the rays of his divine light to shine into her heart, and to fortify it with his grace; and hereupon, she renewed her solemn covenant, in humble thankfulness, with him. She prostrated herself, both body and mind, before the LORD, and devoted and offered herself entirely to the service of his divine MAJESTY, made a vow of perpetual chastity, which she always kept with an angelic sanctity and purity, notwithstanding the great assaults and strange accidents which attacked and tried her deeply. Thus ended this happy day which she used to call *the day of benediction and conversion*. Knowing well that the most certain and prevalent means of attaining a still greater union with God was the solid practice of the virtues of life, she applied herself thereto with all her might; watchful to let no occasion slip of shewing her meekness and patience, of humbling herself, of obeying, of surmounting

herself in every thing, to draw down the divine mercy and favour upon her soul.

As a stone, moved ever so little from its center, returns to it with greater impetuosity, so she, ever so little taken off from the only object of her love, burned with the more ardor and vehemence to return to it. She fell sick, and so continued for five or six months, having a fever without intermission, which reduced her to very great weakness and languor. Her mistress began to be weary of seeing her always out of health, and persuaded herself that sloth was the source of her maladies, and that close and hard labour would be the best remedy for them. She was confirmed in this way of thinking by a person who bore a pious character, who coming to visit her, had met ANNELE so recollected, and retired in herself, as to take little or no notice of her, whereby she was offended. She conceived an unfavourable notion of her, and imputed her disorders to an indiscreet devotion. She said to her mistress, "If ANNELE continues thus, she will go out of her senses, as she is now making great strides toward such a state." Hereupon her mistress, fearing that event in her house, made her work incessantly, and forbade her all her devotions. She exercised and harassed her in such a manner, that I had it from the

mistress's own mouth (telling it by way of diversion) "that if ARMELLE were a Saint, " she had contributed a good deal to it; and " that if any one writ her life, there would " be enough said of herself in it; but that she " could not help it, nor could she have acted " otherwise." Which indicates that it was a special conduct of GOD for ARMELLE's sanctification.

BEFORE this, her employ was only to take care of the children: But now, beside that, she was put to every thing most fatiguing in the house. From morning 'till evening she had no rest allowed her. Often she fainted away under her labour; her mistress attributed it all to vain imaginations and idle pretences. But this was not all: Whatever she did, her mistress still found fault with it, to which she never made any reply, suppressing every movement of impatience or resentment, which the other attributed not to virtue, but to stupidity, and on that account only despised her the more.

ONCE the fever, joined to her constant hard labour, had weakened her to such a degree, that she could keep up no longer, but was constrained to lie down. Short was her repose. Her mistress, after giving her a good reprimand, made her rise and work, reproaching her, and telling her sloth and folly made

her fancy herself sick; that she hated work, and had recourse to contrivances to shun it. She commanded her instantly to carry out dung on her head into the garden. Her very heart shivered with horror at the hearing of this order, having at the same time violent pains in her head. Yet without making any reply, she went like a poor lamb, and was kept to this employ for two days, which were the most painful days she ever felt; because every time she loaded her head she seemed to feel as many thorns run into her head as there were hairs on it. But the consideration of our SAVIOUR's crown of thorns gave her some courage to support it. If every thing were compleatly well finished about the house, her mistress would rather have invented the most disagreeable employment for her, than let her have a moment's respite.

OFTEN about her work she reproached her with her little sense, tho' she did every thing with dexterity, neatness and in a becoming manner. At first she felt these reproaches, especially when they were made before company, and before strangers; for, tho' she was of a low condition, she had a noble and generous heart, susceptible, in such cases, of shame and confusion: But to surmount herself in that, as in every thing else, God permitted that when there was most company,

then her mistress exclaimed against her the most, at which she felt a secret joy, and even at such times was the more forward to present herself before her mistress, the more to mortify herself.

HEREBY her heart became greatly fortified with grace, as appears from the discourses which she used to make when she spoke hereof, which were to the following purpose:

"It seemed to me that all I endured was
"as nothing in regard to the desire I had to
"suffer, after the example of my SAVIOUR,
"who presented himself continually to me
"for a model: For on every occasion he
"inwardly instructed me, as a master does
"his scholar; and I was so attentive to hear
"his voice, and ready to execute his direc-
"tions, that I little regarded whatever was
"said or done to me, keeping myself as
"it were shut up within myself with my di-
"vine Love, whose presence at this time I
"never lost, I even rejoiced to suffer any
"thing for his love, beseeching him to give
"me a high degree of the virtue of patience,
"which he himself had practised through
"the whole time of his life.—Whenever
"my trouble was the greatest, I retired with
"speed to hide myself in the wounds of my
"SAVIOUR, who was my hiding place and

"refuge, and then I would have defied all
 "Hell to hurt me, so much strength and
 "courage I received; and all I suffered seem-
 "ed to me no more than a straw by a great
 "fire."

SHE saw well that without a special assistance of the divine Majesty, she could never have subsisted among so many grievous crosses, without losing all patience. But she was as peaceable and calm as if she had had every satisfaction in the world, receiving with joy, meekness and humility, all the bad treatment she daily and hourly met with; and thinking so meanly and poorly of herself, that she looked upon it all as only too good for her. She acknowledged it all to be the pure favour of God to her, as often she declared to me with tears in her eyes. It melted her into love and thankgivings to her great benefactor.

THE daughter before-mentioned, who loved her exceedingly, and pitied her much for what her mother made her suffer, often read to her in *Thomas a Kempis* of the imitation of JESUS CHRIST. Almost every time she opened the book, it was in the chapter which treats of patience, how we ought to imitate that of our SAVIOUR, to which she listened as if that book had been writ for

herself only; and from thence rose her great desire of sufferings.

At last, after a fever of five or six months, it pleased God to restore her health, but not to take from her the merit of sufferings. For then her mistress forbade her to go to mass except on holidays and Sundays, retaining the fear before infused into her, viz, "that her
" often doing that would make her lose her
" senses." She hearing of it smiled in herself, saying, "No, no, I am no more out of my
" senses since I have found my divine Love,
" and since I love him with my whole heart.
" Formerly when I sought him abroad, with-
" out myself, I was not right in my senses." It indeed at first gave her some pain to be forbidden to go to church: Yet she fully submitted to it, eying her mistress as if she had been CHRIST himself, punctually obeying all her commands. She never complained of her mistress, but only told her confessor of her inward state, trials and sufferings, desiring him to aid her in thanking God for doing her the favour to punish her for her sins in this life, and giving her the means of suffering something for the love of CHRIST. Once her confessor told her that she might quit this place; "How my father, *said she*, would you
" advise me to shun the cross which God
" has sent me? No, no, I will never do it un-

"less you absolutely command me to do
"it. Were I to suffer a thousand times
"more, I will not go out 'till they put me
"out by the shoulders." Her confessor was
exceedingly pleased with her firmness and
constancy, and encouraged her still more and
more to pursue it.

SATAN however tried by all sorts of arti-
fices to draw her out of this place. One while
he represented to her, how she was beloved
"and caressed of her relations, the ease she
"had had in the other houses where she had
"lived; the continual toil and fatigue she
"had in this; that if by force of labour,
"now being young, she became infirm, who
"then would take care of her for the rest of
"her days? That she would be cast off and
"miserable; and that if death followed, she
"would be accounted before God the mur-
"derer of herself."

THIS was not all the brunt she had to
sustain on this occasion. Her dear and affec-
tionate mother often furnished her with
others; for, seeing her so spent and emaciated,
and hearing from other people of the hard
labour she had in this house, she besought her
with tears to leave it, and come to live with
her; but she consoled her mother, assuring
that she was quite well in this place. Some-

times the enemy put it into her mind that “ if
“ an Angel from Heaven were treated in such
“ a manner, he could not forbear returning
“ an answer; and that as to the rest she was
“ the cause of her own hardships; for if once
“ she properly shewed her resentment, her
“ mistress would be more cautious of impos-
“ ing on her; that her silence was not ac-
“ counted any virtue, but mere insensibility.”
To all these insinuations she turned the deaf
ear. Tho’ she had the best reasons in the
world for her own justification; tho’ she
were entirely innocent of all they accused
her of, and scolded her for, never would she
make any reply; but heard it all with admi-
rable calmness and silence. All the time
she was in this Gentlewoman’s service she did
not do any action, or utter any expression,
which discovered the least fault; which she
attributed to the singular favour of God; ob-
serving farther that, “ in such cases, one
“ cannot think how much it concerns the
“ soul to stand firm, and to grant nothing
“ to humour our passion; that the least slip
“ one makes herein often causes an en-
“ tire deviation, or at least a delay of
“ advancement toward perfection; that for
“ her part, if she had not acted thus, the
“ Devil had without doubt conquered her;
“ and that there often needs only one word
“ to give him entrance into a soul.”

As the enemy could not prevail on her to quit this place, he incited her mistress to turn her away. She threatened her for a long time with doing it. ARMELLE was not at all moved by the threat. "Well, my God, said *she in herself*, thy will be done! If it is thy pleasure that I be turned out from hence, with that I am content; but I, on my part, will not procure it, so long as I shall find *wherewith* to suffer for thy love." Several times she saw herself on the verge of her departure, her cloaths packed up, and herself just ready to go off, when some providential obstacle interfered to prevent it. Thus had she passed on betwixt four and five years in this house. She was much esteemed and beloved of every one in it except the mistress, whose husband often chid her for it, and said, "she did very wrong to treat in such a manner a poor girl who rendered her every kind of good services, and that for his part he pitied her." But she had neither eyes to see, nor heart to conceive any thing of it, and wondered how any body could love her, or approve of what she did; God so permitting it for the great good of his handmaid, whom he was willing by this means to purify and refine, as gold in the furnace of sufferings. She often said, "If God had not treated me thus, I should have been dead long

"Just a good creature, and very good."

"ago. What would have made others sick
"was the support of my health."

Toward the end of the fifth year, her mistress discovered what had long been so very manifest to all beside herself, which fell out in the following manner, as I had it from her mistress's own mouth.

ONE day in the summer, being in the country, she had a mind to bathe herself. She took with her this good maid; and being on the brink of the water she perceived ARMELLE all recollected, and retired to herself, without saying a word to her: She falling on her in a rage, said to her, "Well, thou great fool, what art thou dreaming about now?" She, like one suddenly awaked out of a deep sleep, answered with great mildness and simplicity, "I was thinking on the extreme anguish and affliction which had pierced the heart of the Son of God, when he passed over the brook Cedron,* of which this water reminded me." And who learned thee, said the mistress, that the Son of God passed the brook Cedron? She replied, "I don't know but I am assured he passed it." This pierced her mistress to the heart. She discovered what before had been hid from her. The

conduct of ARMELLE, which had before this been insupportable, henceforward appeared to her in a quite different light. Her silence, meekness, patience and submission, which she had always attributed to stupid dullness, and which had caused such a series of cruel usage to the poor girl, now took far other titles; and were acknowledged for real virtues. Now loving and esteeming her highly, she gave her full power to act according to her own discretion, in all affairs of every kind. She felt a violent remorse for having made her suffer so much. Often has she said since this change, that God had blinded her toward ARMELLE, in order to contribute to the sanctification of her soul.

ARMELLE also on her side loved her mistress very tenderly; and both acted before her, and spoke of her, with the greatest respect, even at the very time when she was treated by her with the greatest severity; and whenever she spoke of her mistress since that time, it was as of one to whom, next after God, she thought herself most indebted, by reason of the great benefits and spiritual advantages she had received through her means. She would say, "she could never forget the obligations she lay under to her, and that both in this world and the next, she should ever pray to the LORD to reward her for all

“ the blessings she had received from her.”
She generally called her, *her good mother*.
Often have I heard her say, with tears in her eyes, and in the deepest sense of gratitude,
“ Yes, she is my true mother, for she has
“ helped me to find the true way: And if
“ I could give her the very blood of my veins
“ to do her any service, I would gladly do
“ it.”

AND now what is remarkable in this part of her life is this; in the time of her hardest persecutions, the Devil with all his artifices had never been able to prevail on her to demand her discharge from this house; but now that every thing was rendered both quite easy, and highly favourable to her in it, she became desirous to leave it; whereupon her mistress made her all the offers possible to prevail on her to continue with her; but she still persisted in her resolution of departing thence as soon as her year should expire. In that time the eldest daughter married a Gentleman, who commonly resided in a house he had in the country near *Vannes*, being his native soil; his new spouse desired her mother to give her this good maid to take care of her house. She consented to her importunity with reluctance, regretting her being deprived of so faithful a servant, tho' it was to satisfy the earnest desire of her daughter

As for ARMELLE herself, she the more readily consented hereto, as it would remove her farther from her relations and acquaintance, that by the distance from, and oblivion of these, detached, as it were, from ever thing, she might the more freely and entirely give herself up to the love and service of God, which was her only desire. Moreover her relations were still soliciting her to marry: Wherefore she thought God had presented her with this opportunity of disengaging herself from their importunities, and of having more enjoyment of him in solitude.

THE day of her departure from *Ploermel* being come, she felt an extreme joy at her setting off, yet mixt with sorrow at leaving her good mistress, and the house in which God had done her so many favours, and where she had so abundantly felt the effects of his mercy. All who knew her in this town were sorry for her departure, but particularly those of the house she had lived in, and most of all the children, who were passionately fond of her, as she had always taken great care of them. Her mother was the person who had the greatest pain to consent to her daughter's removing to so great a distance, as she both loved her excessively and hoped for assistance and consolation from her, being now a widow and advanced in age.

The daughter, desirous to give her the best consolation in her power, freely gave up to her all that she had to come to herself from her father, besides all she could spare from her earnings in service, resigning and referring herself to the care of Providence, in whom she had a perfect confidence. Thus fortified, she took leave of her native country, and came to *Vannes*, at about twenty-nine or thirty years of age.

Soon after her arrival here, she commenced the experience of a rigorous passive purification, which continued two years.—I shall not enter into a detail (as I think it would be agreeable to very few readers) of the sad succession of heavy and stunning trials, of gloomy apprehensions and terrors, of her dread of separation from God, and loss of everlasting happiness, wherewith she was continually haunted during that time; but hasten to the view of that brighter state which followed it, and continued to the period of her days. She would sometimes say, “When
“ the soul is blest with the approbation of
“ God, and experiences the effects of his
“ grace, every thing which can befall it is
“ easily supportable: But when God retires
“ and leaves it to itself, when it seems at
“ every step to fall into what offends him,

“ without being able to avoid it; oh! then
“ it is that such a soul is worthy of compas-
“ sion indeed, as its sufferings are deep and
“ grievous, without any support or hope.

AT length having gone out into a field to deplore, without being seen or heard by any body, her miserable condition, as to her it then seemed, here she was filled with the sudden renewed sense of the love of God, setting before her in a clear light all his gracious designs toward her, even from her past trials, and the secret supports he had afforded to her under them. She was overcome by this divine visitation, saluting her so unexpectedly, to such a degree, that, from the overflowings of love and gratitude, she poured forth a flood of tears; most ardently desiring to live henceforth to the LORD alone. She continued about two hours in rendering to him thanksgivings; after which she returned to the house, but in a state far different from that in which she had come out of it.

It had seemed sometimes to give some comfort to her mind, in her dark state, to reflect that before she removed to *Vannes*, she had consulted her director, and had his consent and approbation. Often she thought, if she had not had that, she could not have subsisted in it. Now she became desirous

again of meeting with some good director, and her mistress recommended her to one who suited and was of service to her. She rejoiced greatly at her having met with such an one. She entreated him with tears to spare nothing that was required, that God alone might be master of her heart, to have regard neither to life nor health, nor conveniency; neither to her honour, nor satisfaction, or to any thing whatsoever, but to this one great point only, as she was resolved on punctual obedience to every duty discovered to her, cost what it would; that all nature in her might be subdued, and nothing but pure grace, without any mixture, be left to have the dominion there.

SHE had before this laid open to him all her dispositions past and present, with so much clearness, humility, discretion, and prudence that he was quite astonished, and in a rapture to hear a poor villager express herself in such a manner. Her body being reduced to a weak state from the great concerns of her soul, her director got her removed to the town, to the house of a very pious widow, whether he brought some physicians to see her, and some good persons who were greatly edified by her conversation. After some time she returned, grew better, and recovered strength sufficient for employing herself in

household occupations, in which, as soon as she had the least health, she laboured indefatigably, and could have wished to do alone the whole work of the house. She overdid her strength, whereby she relapsed. Thus in frequent maladies she passed three or four years.

THE wisdom and goodness of God appeared wonderful in introducing her into a way so remote from that in which till then she had walked. He gave her gradually such intelligences as facilitated to her the entrance into it, when there was not one in the country with whom she was acquainted, whom she could freely speak to on the subject: Yet his divine providence conducts all things efficaciously. She could speak of this as one well experienced both in the one way and the other. She discovered a great deal of mixture, and of human, in the former; which made her say, that "wherever any
" thing of the creature is found, so much
" there is of defect and imperfection, which
" souls meet with in their progress. It is that
" they are not willing to leave God alone to
" act, but always want to have a part with
" him in what he does: that in regard to
" herself, her first manner of acting had been
" necessary for her, in order to consume and
" destroy, by the ardent flame she felt toward

" God, all that was disagreeable in his sight;
 " that to such souls as he attracts thereto,
 " at the beginning this is of great advantage;
 " and that we cannot enter too early into
 " that life which makes us die to ourselves;
 " but that the number of such is small; and
 " I think the reason of it, *proceeded* *from*, arises
 " generally from two sources: the one, a
 " want of trust in God; the other, that souls
 " are not willing to die to themselves, there
 " being few that are willing to oppose and
 " subdue their own imperfections and faults,
 " to that pitch of fidelity which the di-
 " vine light makes known to, and requires of
 " them."

At this time our house wanted a *Tourière*,*
 having only one who alone was not sufficient
 for the service of it, insomuch that we
 applied to ARMELLE's confessor, to have one
 of his training, having a great confidence in
 him; and he, who had a great affection for our
 community, thought he could not serve us bet-
 ter than in procuring us this virtuous maid. He
 saw her continual occupations were a great
 hindrance to the recovery of her former
 health and strength; and we, having heard
 much said of her virtue, were exceeding
 glad to have her in our house: But her master

* A *drugé* is a Nun.

and mistress could not agree to it. They resented exceedingly her going out from them, made great complaints of it to that father, and signified to him that their resentments would be of as long duration as her absence from them. As for the good ARMELLE, she was perfectly obedient, ready to do whatever she was commanded.

AFTER she came into our house, she began by little and little to gather strength. We took a singular liking to her from the rare virtues we remarked in her, and endeavoured to give her all the relief in our power, not willing that she should labour in any thing which might affect her health. She demeaned herself with so much virtue, silence, modesty and submission, that all our Nuns were exceedingly edified therewith. Several often begged leave to go to talk with her, and were delighted to hear her speak of God, and of his holy love, especially on the days when she had communicated: One would have thought one saw and heard St. CATHARINE of *Senna* or *Genoa*. In this condition she passed very contentedly about a year and a half, in which time she recovered her health greatly. It seemed as if this was the design for which God brought her hither:—She was employed in the service of the boarders, of which she acquitted herself with so much re-

spect, tho' she was only a servant, that they feared as much to displease her as their mistresses. Her very presence and the modesty which appeared in her countenance were sufficient to retain them in their duty. This was a great relief to the Nuns who had the care of them, when on any occasion they were obliged for some time to leave them out of their sight: For they well knew that if ARMELLE was there, all would go as well as if they were present themselves.

If any of them neglected their duty, or shewed any obstinacy or bad humour, which is common enough among children, she instructed and counselled them in private, watching the opportunities when her words might have their effect, which she did with so much delicacy, charity, and cordiality, that she gained on their little minds all she wished for, and caused to flow into their hearts sentiments of piety and devotion, instilling into them good principles of virtue fit for every condition of life, which they might happen to meet with, and which has succeeded in several of them with very good effects.

SHE was careful that nothing should be wanting to them for their use or service; and did every thing with so much order and

calmness, that one would have said she had nothing to do. Her devotions were so regular, that they did not hinder her, in the least, from acquitting herself of every part of what her labour required. I may say, all the time she resided in our house one never discovered in her any word, or action, with any mark of the least fault: On the contrary, the true and solid virtues in her were so conspicuous, as to gain her the love and esteem of all that knew her.

In our house every thing was made as easy to her as possible, from the great love every one had for her: But whatever was agreeable to nature, as ease and content, she was afraid of. It did not answer her desire of suffering like CHRIST her LORD and Saviour. She thought she felt her old inclinations and passions, which had been subdued, in danger of rising again. Her liveliness of spirit toward God seemed to be flattened: and that constant familiar intercourse, which before she had had with him, to be slackened. All this made her think our house was not the place in which God would have her to continue; in which sentiment she was more and more confirmed, till at length it became a fixed assurance: And God, who conducts affairs to serve his own designs, furnished her with means very reasonable for removing from us:

For that gentlewoman with whom she had lived had not ceased, since she left her to try all possible ways to get her back again; but without effect till this time; that being big with child, and very much indisposed, she greatly feared lest some bad accident would befall her in lying-in. One day speaking to the Confessor abovesaid of this apprehension she told him, "If she could have her ARMELLE near her at that time it would be a great consolation to her." Hereupon the father advised her to ask our Prioress for her; as he thought she would not refuse her on such an occasion. She, emboldened by this assurance, came immediately to the Prioress and made her request with such earnestness that she granted it; hoping ARMELLE would afterwards come back again. But when she once had her in her house, never once after would she consent to her quitting it: Nor did ARMELLE herself desire any more to leave it, having evident proofs of its being her right place; and of the will of God that she should be there.

INDEED her Confessor, and our mother's, often solicited her to return; and the love she had for the house, and the desire to serve it, were powerful motives to incline her to it; But the will of him who ruled her heart and life prevailed far above every thing be-

side. The love and esteem she preserved, all her life long, for our house, were very manifest. It was the usual place of her visits, whither she came to give vent to the flames of divine love which burned in her heart, in the familiar discourse she had with some pious Nuns. All in the house preserved also, on their side, a great love for her, caused by the high esteem they had for her virtue. She prayed for our community. Often affected with gratitude, she said she should never forget, either in this world or the next, the kindnesses she had received therein. Oftentimes she pleasantly called it *her house*, and *her place of refuge*; "because, *said she*, it is the house of my father who is God: And children use to confide in what belongs to their father." At length seeing that she was no more to live there, for the love of our Lord, and with great humility, she asked our Mother Prioress to be, after her decease, interrred in some corner of our chapel: Which was readily granted by her and by the whole community.

ARMELLE, now reinstated in her former place, was of very great service therein; and a bright example in all her conduct. In October, 1656, her mistress died, after a painful illness, which had held her eighteen months; during which time she had rendered her every

manner of assistance in her power, with such assiduity, that she left her neither by day nor night, but for things absolutely necessary. She afterwards came to see me. I asked her whether, during the long illness of her mistress, and of the rest of the family, one or other of whom were for the most part indisposed, she had not been at sometimes overtaken with weariness and impatience; seeing they all had recourse to her cares; and often she was almost as weak as those very persons whom she was obliged to tend. She answered me, "Not at all through the mercy of my
" God, whose goodness to his poor creature is
" so great, and who holds me so entirely sub-
" jected to his empire, that nothing stirs or
" moves in me but by his orders."

AFTER this, as she was passing along the street, by the kick of a horse she was thrown down on the ground, and her leg broken. For this she immediately thanked God: And tho' she suffered exquisite pains, which continued with her till her death, she never shewed any sign of impatience or inquietude through them all; which caused admiration in all that saw her suffer with so much cheerfulness. One who had been to see her told me at his return, "If an Angel had a body,
" and had the leg broke, he could not suffer
" with a better grace than the good ARMELLE."

And so thought every one that saw her. She desired them to thank God for the great favour which, through his goodness, he had conferred on her. It was above fifteen months before she could go out, There fell a humour on the other leg, and gave her almost as much pain as that which was broken.

ALL this time she was on the bed, or sat in the chair; and they carried her to mass only on holidays and Sundays. The rest of the time she stayed in a little corner of the kitchen, to give orders about the household business; and employed herself in one thing or other for the utility of the house, being never idle. Several persons of all ranks went to see her, all of whom were much edified by her holy conversation and her great patience.

TOWARD the end of the year she began to walk in the house with crutches; which, to her, was a cause of great satisfaction and thankfulness. One day in 1669, three years after her fall, she was carried to hear mass; where, after paying her devotion, she on a sudden miraculously recovered the use of her legs, and afterwards walked easily in the house, or in the streets, with only a staff, till near her end.

Soen after this she came to see us, and could not tell how enough to celebrate this miracle, and to invite us to join with her in praising the LORD for it. Informing me of her state, she said, "I know not what to say, but that the mercies and favours of God, who is my love and my all, are unutterable and infinite. He dwells in my soul, and condescends to rule there as my Sovereign. I have no will or desire for any thing whatsoever; unless he gives me it. My will is destroyed, and I have none but his. Thus I pass the days and the nights, if he does not turn me to some particular object." I asked if she had not been troubled at being so long deprived of the holy communion, since her leg was broke, as she used so diligently to attend it every day before. She replied, "To suffer for love is better than to enjoy love. Then she added as follows: "Oh, how well God knows how to give himself at all times, and all places, which has no desire for any thing else, but himself only! Formerly it seemed to me impossible to live without receiving my divine love in his holy communion: But now I am, through his grace, in a perpetual union with him." Oh happy state, a blessed end of her labours and sufferings! Thus she continued, till the 24th day of October, 1671; between twelve and one o'clock she peaceably expired, and left the

sweet odour of her excellent spirit and exemplary life, as a rich perfume on the minds of many who had been witnesses thereof, and who now had no doubt of her being gone to enjoy forever what she had some years before spoken of in the following terms; viz. "I have nothing to do here below. Nothing keeps me here but the will of my God: For on my part I have done what he had required of me; and am entirely ready to go whenever it shall please him: for he sent me into this world only to love him: And through his great mercy, I have loved him so much that I cannot do it to any higher degree, after the manner of mortals. I must go to do it after the manner of the blessed in heaven, Between God and me then is nothing but the frailties of this poor body, so weakened by the strength of love that a slight blast is sufficient to destroy it, and thereby to open the way for me to go immediately to him who possesses all my love."

SHE was interred according to her desire, with great solemnity. Her funeral was attended by a vast concourse of people, of the four parishes of the town of *Vannes*, whose hearts, at that time appeared to be deeply affected with a sense of the many real excellencies of this faithful and devoted handmaid of the LORD.

The second Volume, of the life of ARMELLE NICOLAS in French, contains only the display of her virtues particularly specified, with her expressions at many different times and on many occasions, from which a few extracts, I think, deserve a place here: And first of all the following Journal.

A
JOURNAL
OF
ARMELLE NICOLAS'S

DAILY MANNER OF LIFE.

“ **N**EVER did I so ardently ask for any
 “ thing in the prayer which I put up to
 “ God every day, that he would be pleased to
 “ admit me into his school, among the number
 “ of his disciples. How well, Oh! my God,
 “ hast thou accomplished what I asked!
 “ Thou hast taken me into thy school, and
 “ admitted me into thy company; yes me
 “ poor ignorant as I am. Thou hast learn-
 “ ed me more in one day than all the men

“ in the world could have done in my whole
“ life. Since that time I considered myself
“ as a disciple of Christ, a scholar of his holy
“ spirit. I was attentive to his command,
“ ready and careful to execute it, as a willing
“ servant or scholar does in what his master
“ orders. While doing it, I had my view
“ fixed upon him, to imitate what he had
“ done in this world. If it were any thing
“ which he had not done, he shewed me how
“ to do it in the manner which was most agreeable to him.

“ Thus in all things, both great and small,
“ he instructed me. Even he himself, through
“ an excess of goodness, condescended to
“ guide me. He let me see that I was like
“ those young scholars, who are beginning to learn to write, to whom the master not only gives a fair copy, but even
“ guides their hands to learn them rightly
“ to form their letters. Thus very often I
“ felt another hand which as it were guided mine, Oh how that mark of kindness and care inflamed my heart with love to him!
“ This did not pass in the imagination or fancy. It was a real and pure truth which I saw
“ more clear than the day. Besides this, he reproved me for all my faults; so jealous was
“ he over me to render me quite perfect,
“ in such sort that I durst not stir a hand,

“ make a gesture, cast a look, or utter an un-
“ profitable word, but at the same instant
“ I was reprov'd and that with so much
“ exactness that nothing escap'd divine
“ notice: Wherefore having discovered that,
“ I kept myself so upright, and had so great
“ a fear of displeasing him, that I dared not
“ to go forward or backward by his orders,
“ and all through love for him. He seem-
“ ed like to those fathers who love their chil-
“ dren so tenderly that, they cannot suffer in
“ them any thing which displeases them. Of-
“ ten when, in haste and hurry, I was just
“ going to say or do something, I found my-
“ self stopt short on a sudden. I said to my-
“ self, to say or do such things in the pre-
“ sence and in the view of thy love, who-
“ ever has his eye upon thee, Oh it is
“ what ought to give thee very great fear and
“ care!

“ Thus it seem'd to me that I was the
“ child of love, and that he was my father,
“ who led me by the hand to every thing I
“ should do. It was my daily care and prac-
“ tice, to attend him from morning 'till
“ evening, from my first waking 'till my go-
“ ing to sleep again. Even in my labour
“ with him I entertained myself. I loved
“ him and rejoiced in him. And if any oc-

“cupations were presented which required
“all the attention of my mind, I had never-
“theless my heart toward him: And as
“soon as they were finished, I ran to him
“again; as a person does who is passionate-
“ly fond of another.” Such was my ALL,
“from whom it seemed impossible for me
“to separate myself. I could not live but
“in his presence; for I know well, he him-
“self taught me it, that so long as I should
“duely regard him I could neither offend
“him, nor forbear to love him.”

“THE more I beheld him the more I
“knew his divine perfections and my own
“nothingness and misery; in such sort that
“I forgot myself, as unworthy of attention,
“to raise above myself and above all creat-
“ed things, in order to unite and attach my
“self to him only. My whole bent was to
“please him in every thing I did, and con-
“tinually to keep the strictest watch not
“to offend him. I admitted no other to in-
“terrupt this, which I did not do to obtain
“the benefit it brings, or avoid the sad con-
“sequences of its neglect; all views of self-
“interest were so remote from my mind that
“I did not think on them. It was divine
“love only which inflamed and engrossed all
“my heart. When I found he was pleas-
“ed, I was happy. Without that, all the
“charms of this life to me were nothing.”

“ As soon as I awaked in the morning I
“ threw myself into the arms of my divine
“ love as a child does into those of its father.
“ I rose to serve him, and to labour to please
“ him. If I had time for prayer I fell on
“ my knees in his divine presence, begging
“ all his holy will might be accomplished in
“ me, and that he would not permit me to
“ offend him in the least thing. In him I
“ occupied myself as long as the other occu-
“ pations of the day permitted. Very often
“ I had not leisure to say the LORD’s pray-
“ er all the day; but that gave me no con-
“ cern. I thought it as much my duty to
“ work for him as to pray to him, be-
“ cause he had shewed me that is a true
“ prayer. In his company I dressed my-
“ self, and he shewed me that he furnish-
“ ed me wherewith to dress myself. When
“ I went to my work he left me not, nor
“ did I leave him. He wrought with me
“ and I with him. Oh how sweetly does
“ work go on with such good company!
“ By him all my pains and fatigues were
“ well paid. From thence I drew so much
“ strength and courage that nothing seemed
“ difficult to me. I wished to do alone the
“ whole work of the house. I concluded
“ that I had my body only for work, and
“ my heart for love, with which it burned
“ in that endearing familiarity with him,

“ wherewith he was pleased so amply to favour me.

“ WHEN I was at my meals, I enjoyed
“ the repast in his divine presence, as well
“ as I did every thing else. It seemed to me
“ as if every morsel were dipped in his precious blood, and that himself thus gave it
“ to me to nourish me both in body and
“ soul, still more to inflame me with his love.
“ I leave you to think what effects this
“ must operate in my mind. Oh without
“ doubt they are beyond conception, and
“ there is none but he who can tell them.
“ As to poor me, were I to employ my whole
“ life therein, I could never do it.

“ IF in the course of the day, amidst the
“ bustles, hurries and incessant hard labours,
“ of it, the body felt any pain or weariness,
“ ready to complain or to take its ease; if I
“ let myself be touched with anger, or any
“ other movement of irregular passion, my,
“ divine love instantly enlightened me, and
“ shewed that I must entirely slay every such
“ rebellion of corrupt nature, and by no
“ means allow them any life either by word
“ or action. This love not only kept the
“ door of my lips, but set a guard over my
“ heart, that nothing might contribute to

“ nourish any irregular motions there ; so
“ they were forced to die at their birth.

“ BUT if at any time I was not enough
“ on my guard, and let myself by surprize
“ be moved into any fault, alas, I could have
“ no rest ’till I had obtained my pardon, and
“ my God was reconciled to me. I prostrat-
“ ed myself at his holy footstool, weeping be-
“ fore him. To him I confessed my faults
“ as if he knew them not, owned all my
“ weakness, and thus continued ’till pardon
“ was granted, and his friendship confirmed
“ more than before, which through his great
“ mercy and goodness constantly followed,
“ whenever I slipt into any fault: And that
“ served still more and more to inflame
“ my heart with gratitude and love toward
“ him.

“ WHEN men persecuted me with slan-
“ ders and their scorn, or evil spirits with
“ their temptations, I immediately had re-
“ course to my love, who stretched forth to
“ me his sacred arms, shewing me even his
“ heart and wounds open for my protection,
“ in which I found my safe and impregnable
“ fortress, where I was stronger than all the
“ infernal powers combined together. If all
“ creatures had then risen up against me, I
“ should have feared them no more than a

“ fly, the mighty God being the safeguard of
“ my soul. If sometimes he hid his face,
“ and seemed to withdraw, I said to him,
“ *Oh it is no matter : Conceal thyself from me, yet*
“ *will I serve thee not the less for it : For I know*
“ *thou art my God ;* then I tried to keep on
“ my guard more strictly, and to be more
“ faithful for fear of displeasing in any thing
“ my beloved. That indeed was my only
“ fear. At these times I more fully disco-
“ vered my own poverty and misery, and
“ confided more and more in my Lord,
“ being content with being in that condition
“ all the rest of my life if he pleased. But
“ he did not leave me in it ; and if I may
“ use the expression, it seemed as if he could
“ not forbear caressing me any more than I
“ could live without him. For after a short ab-
“ sence, at his return he heaped on me so
“ many favours, with such divine and ten-
“ der affection, that I scarce knew how to
“ contain them. To help me to support
“ them he often made me quit every thing,
“ to hide myself in some retired place, in or-
“ der to discharge my heart by the tears and
“ the praises which I rendered to his divine
“ majesty. I was even afraid of the excess of
“ his kind endearments, when I cried to him
“ that it was not his caresses and favours that
“ I asked for, but himself alone without any
“ thing else. I was obliged to admit and

“ receive them since such was his blessed and
“ heavenly will.

“ If on holidays after I had heard mass,
“ I returned to my household affairs; and did
“ not stir from them all the day long, tarry-
“ ing within to send the other servants to the
“ vespers and the sermons. Or any wanted
“ on these days to prevail on me to join with
“ them in their vain diversions, I excused
“ myself, infinitely preferring the enjoy-
“ ment of those which my love gave me,
“ which were so much the greater and more
“ delicious, as I was the more separated from
“ all other conversation. And when they
“ wondered at seeing me still all alone in the
“ house, I said in myself, *Oh if you knew the*
“ *most glorious company which I have, ye would be*
“ *far from thinking of me as you do. I am*
“ *never less alone than when I appear most to be*
“ *alone.*

“ AFTER this manner passed my days, as
“ well the working days as holidays, in which I
“ often had no less work than the others. But
“ that was as nothing to me, to whom labour
“ and rest, hard work and ease, every thing
“ was indifferent; as I did not look on what
“ I had to do, but on him for whose sake I
“ did it. His love so engrossed my whole

“ heart, that I had not any leifure to con-
“ sider myself, or any thing elſe but him
“ alone.

“ WHEN the evening was come and every
“ one went to reſt, I found mine only in the
“ arms of divine love. I fell aſleep on his
“ holy breaſt, as a child does on the boſom
“ of his mother; ſtill loving and praifing
“ God, till ſleep ſeized me. Often this love
“ waked me again, and ſo ſtrongly impreſſed
“ all my ſenſes, that I paſſed a great part
“ of my nights without ſleeping, and ſpent it
“ all in the embraces of that lovely grace
“ which never left me, watched, and was
“ always attentive to ſuch a vile worthleſs
“ creature as I am.

“ SUCH has been my life for thoſe twenty
“ years paſt, without ever perceiving the leaſt
“ diminution of the love which he poured
“ into my heart, at the very time of my en-
“ tire converſion. Nay, on the contrary I
“ have obſerved its daily increaſe, tho’ every
“ day it ſeemed impoſſible to admit any ad-
“ dition to what I already enjoyed. But true-
“ ly it is an infinite love with which I find
“ myſelf nourished and ſatiſfied; ſo that
“ every day I have a new hunger, tho’ me-
“ thinks I can receive no more than what I
“ poſſeſs already every moment.”

THE author of the account of her life informs us, that for a long while she could bear no other discourse but of God and his holy love. "I cannot imagine, *said she*, how a soul created for Heaven can be concerned about the dross of this world." Her common discourses were always holy and edifying. If she happened to be in company where the subject of the discourse was vain and unprofitable, she had a wonderful faculty of giving it such a handsome turn as to change it to something good and truly useful. She used to recommend silence to keep the thoughts together in the center of the heart, as the beginning of union with God, raising the affections from earthly things, and fixing them on heavenly objects. "We ought, *said she*, to lose our familiarity with the creatures, if we desired to enjoy the conversation of the creator, a moment of which affords more delight and satisfaction than all the finest discourses in the world."

WHEN a certain person asked her, whether she did not know such a story with which the town rang at that time, she answered, "No; and gave God thanks that she never knew any thing of the news of this world, nor desired to know it. But *she said*, she knew a great deal of the love and mercies of Al-

“ mighty GOD: For this was all she desired
“ to know, and wherewith her heart was en-
“ tirely taken up, that sometimes indeed she
“ enquired after the news about heaven; as
“ is the custom when one designs to go into
“ a country to live there, one enquires of the
“ inhabitants, and of such as live there already,
“ how they do there, and what way one
“ must take to come thither. So I sometimes
“ converse with saints and angels, all whom
“ I esteem as my own brethren, enquiring
“ how they do in my father’s house and coun-
“ try where, through his great mercy, I hope
“ to live to all eternity. Such is the only
“ news I enquire about, and and that not
“ often: For my divine love seldom permits
“ me to occupy myself in any thing else but
“ himself alone.”

So much for her observance of the first and great command of heaven to mankind, *To love the LORD her GOD with all her heart and soul and strength*: Her observance of the second kept pace with it. The love of her neighbour viz of all men, enemies as well as friends, in seeking to do them good on every occasion which fell in her way, or was presented to her mind, both to their bodies and more especially their immortal souls, was extraordinary and unwearied, of which instances are given too numerous and large to be here par-

ticularised. When she looked upon the happy state she had attained, and the severe doom awaiting the multitudes of profligate wretches, she felt a most tender and commiserating love; her very bowels yearned with compassion and with earnest desire of their timely flight from the wrath to come. She used on this occasion sometimes to say, “ She “ seemed to herself like one that had been “ in a great storm at sea, by stress of weather “ like to be cast away every minute, who, “ getting at last safe and sound ashore, could “ not but remember the dangers her brethren “ and near relations were exposed to, being “ tossed up and down in the huge ocean, and “ left to the mercy of the roaring billows. “ Alas! *said she*, thus it is with me when I lay “ to heart the danger sinners run themselves “ into: For the more endearing marks of “ divine grace the Lord has been pleased to “ bestow upon me, the more fervent is my “ desire that others also might partake of the “ same with me.”

Of the modesty, gravity, and solemnity of her external appearance and deportment the aforesaid author observes, that her carriage and countenance indicated something divine and supernatural, and as if God were manifest in every thing she did, and in all her motions, in such sort, *says the said author*,

“ that I have heard several persons say, if
“ they had not belief of a God, it had been
“ enough for them to behold the counte-
“ nance of the good ARMELLE to convince
“ them that there is one.” Others said, that
the least motion she made proclaimed to
them “ God is here.” In truth it had been
difficult to see her without being moved, and
seized with a veneration of God, and the
temple of the HOLY GHOST; insomuch that
tho’ she was only a poor servant, one saw ne-
vertheless a certain Majesty shine forth in her,
which induced people to judge that her soul
amply partook of the divine perfections.

ALL her movements were so adjusted, that
those who have most frequently been with
her have declared, they never saw any
“ part of her conduct in the least irregular,
“ or which favoured of any passion;” a very
evident proof of the great empire she had
acquired over herself, considering her trying
condition of a servant, which often furnished
her with occasions of the contrary; being obli-
ged to take care of every thing which passed
in the house, to watch that all did their duty,
to whom also all addressed themselves to get
what they wanted, from the least to the
greatest; all whom she satisfied with so much
sweetness and modesty, as nothing on earth
could exceed.

IN her most pressing occupations she was as attentive to God as if she had nothing to do. Several times have I heard her say, that one of the things which she endeavoured most to avoid was eagerness and trouble amidst her occupations; as she often had them in so great a number, and so many different persons to answer and satisfy at once: Nevertheless God had wonderfully assisted, and born her up, so as to maintain her in a state as calm as if she had nothing to try or assault her. "I applied myself, *said she* "to every thing, as if it had been the only "one I had to do, without any eagerness or "precipitation, because divine love directed "me; for indeed but for that, it had been "impossible for me to avoid it, considering "the continual hurries I was in; and yet not "the least thing failed of being done in the "due season."

GOING along the streets she walked in such an humble composed frame of mind, as conveyed edification to all that observed her. From her very carriage every one conceived an esteem of her sanctity. She never turned her head on one side or other to gratify any curiosity. She neither stopped at the sight of any body, nor spoke to any unless it were necessary, holding on her way, as if there had been none but God and herself in the

world. She was so affable that no body coming to speak to her ever met with any repulse or rough look; and yet so holy and worthy of veneration, that if any one coming to her had any emotion, resentment, or anger, it was dissipated and quieted presently by her sole presence. Some have assured me that they could not look at her, or be in her company, when their conscience was pressed with certain faults which they were not willing to quit, because her very look struck them with remorse. Others have told me that being assaulted with some passion, they had no better remedy to surmount it than to figure to themselves the angelic countenance of the good ARMELLE.

HER spirit was so equal that one never perceived any change in her countenance. She was always the same happen what would. Whether she were in health or sickness, labour or rest, esteem or blame, she scarce ever changed through all the changes which befell her, because her heart was above them all.

THIS modesty which accompanied all her actions was conspicuous also in her dress which, tho' coarse and homely, was nevertheless very clean and neat. Her linen, after she had worn it a fortnight or three weeks

appeared almost as clean as the first day she had it on. One asking her if she had not some vanity or self-love in the neatness and cleanness of her linen, she replied, "Ah, no: If I knew that my heart had the least vain attachment to these trifles, I would rather cast all the clothes and linen I have into the fire, and be only covered with rags; but through the goodness of God it does not descend into such folly, nor admit such thoughts." She loved silence much, saying in herself, "To love (or to drink in the love of) God is better than to speak." So she was silent to the creatures, in order to converse with the Creator. "The soul," *said she*, which is truly in love with God "thinks all its force and faculties too little for loving him; so is not willing to lose any part of that love in words or to let it evaporate in discourses. On the contrary, it carefully keeps itself so collected within as to wish all that is without were converted and changed into divine love.

It may be said that her life, like that of the just, was a *life of faith*.* In the abundance of communications which God imparted to her soul, with so much effusion and plenitude, as she sometimes experienced, she would

* Heb. x. 38.

say, " My God, thou knowest that I seek
 " nothing but thself, Give then thy car-
 " resses to them who know thee not, in order
 " to attract them to thee. As for me, oh my
 " love, 'tis enough that I know thou art my
 " God, to make me burn with thy love.
 " She durst not fix her mind on any of the
 " views or sentiments which God commu-
 " nicated to her, *because said she*, all that we
 " conceive, how sublime soever, is not God.
 " We ought to go on further, for fear of
 " attaching ourselves to any thing else but
 " him."

HER holy trust and confidence in him arose
 gradually to such a height as to render her
 undaunted. Often she said, " If Heaven and
 " Earth should be dissolved I should not be
 " afraid: And if all men, and devils too
 " conspired to my destruction, I should have
 " no fear; knowing I have God for me,
 " who will defend and keep me. I am so
 " well assured of his goodness, that nothing
 " will befall me but what will tend to his
 " glory; which is the only thing I desire both
 " in this world and the next."

SHE looked higher than men or saints.
 She said, If the King were my father, I would
 " not go to beg the assistance of his valets,
 " nor hope for my happiness from his sub-

“jects; but rather would depend on the
“ability and the will which he would have
“to do me good. With much greater reason
“ought I to hope for every thing (good for
“me) from my God; who has been pleased,
“in so many instances, to make me sensible
“that he has adopted me into the number of
“his children,”

SHE even thanked God that she could not read, when some expressed their wishes that she had learned it, as it would be a great means of advancement toward perfection. But she had recourse to the Lord and said to him, “Oh my Love, my All, to thee I
“offer the book of my conscience. Thou
“knowest that I cannot read in any other
“book than that. Vouchsafe to take it, turn
“over its leaves, examine it fully, efface what
“ever is not pleasing to thee, and inscribe all
“that is agreeable to thy holy will.” She
“said, “I could not forbear thus presenting
“to him the book of my conscience: And
“he, on his side, presented himself to the
“eyes of my soul as a great book, in which
“I saw and learned, as in the twinkling of
“an eye, more sublime and truly profitable
“learning than I could have done all my life
“long, by the very best instructions of all
“the best qualified men in the world. So I
“often said to my teacher, oh how well hast

" thou known how to supply all the defects
 " of my ignorance ! For not being able to
 " read in books, thou hast made thyself my
 " book, my lesson, and my master. In this
 " book I met with all I needed ; I read in it
 " (and delighted so to do) by night as well
 " as by day. Was it needful for me to suf-
 " fer, to deny my self, to conquer and subdue
 " myself, to be humble in mortification, or
 " active in duty ? In that book I read in-
 " telligibly the best way and manner how to
 " do it, to such a degree, that I could not
 " but execute what was so divinely taught
 " me in it, And I saw clearly that this was
 " infinitely the best of knowledge, all other
 " sciences being of little value compared with
 " this."

It may well be said that to her state belong-
 ed two sacred texts, one of divine command,
 the other of approbation ; 1st. *Walk in my pre-
 sence, and be thou perfect.* Gen. xvii. 2d. *I
 know thy works and tribulation and poverty ; but
 thou art rich.* Rev. ii. 9.

6 NO 61.

FINIS.

